Emergency Solutions Grants RUSH2

Application Information Packet

May 6, 2025

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Aging

**Please note that funding of applications submitted in response to this Request for Applications is contingent upon the State receiving funds from the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).**

**Applications must be submitted no later than**

**5:00 pm on Friday, June 3, 2025.**

**All program and application information is subject to change should additional guidance be provided by HUD.**





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# Section I. Introduction

## Purpose

In order to address the impacts of Hurricane Helene on the Federal disaster declared areas (see Appendix 2), HUD is providing a supplemental allocation of ESG-RUSH funds as authorized by 42 U.S.C. l 1364a(c)(l). These special RUSH funds are to be used to address the needs of homeless individuals or families at risk of homelessness in areas affected by a major disaster declared pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) on or after December 20, 2019, whose needs are not otherwise served or fully met by existing Federal disaster relief programs, including the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program under such Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b). This allocation of "Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing" (RUSH) funding under the ESG Program is in response to the President's major disaster declaration dated September 28, 2024, DR-4827-NC, for Tropical Storm Helene and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) determination that this disaster was severe enough to activate its TSA program.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will administer North Carolina’s RUSH 2 funds. NCDHHS is seeking proposals for up to $1,910,417 million in ESG-RUSH funding for homeless services providers in North Carolina to assist with responding to the major disaster declaration, subject to the availability and appropriation of funds.

ESG-RUSH funding may be used to fund any of the eligible ESG program activities – Emergency Shelter, Homelessness Prevention, and Rapid Rehousing. The State is seeking applications from non-profit organizations and local government entities who are serving the federal disaster declared areas as noted in Appendix 2. To that end, the State is prioritizing funding toward Housing Stability activities that can be quickly implemented to assist individuals and families living in unsheltered environments and those exiting congregate and non-congregate shelter sites to permanent housing.

## Prioritizing Access to Housing Stability Activities

North Carolina is receiving a significant allocation of RUSH funding that, in partnership with CoCs, should be strategically used to respond to this disaster and end homelessness in North Carolina. This investment has the potential to help countless people exit homelessness. RUSH funds must be appropriately targeted to meet the needs of the people we serve in an efficient and targeted way.

North Carolina is prioritizing Housing Stability, particularly Rapid Rehousing, to move individuals into permanent housing as quickly as possible. With the scale of resources in North Carolina, CoCs and Agencies should ensure that Housing Stability resources are available to all individuals that need it, according to community prioritization processes, including those with more complex needs.

# Section II. General Application Information and Notices

## Federal and State Governing Authority

It is the responsibility of each applicant applying for ESG funding to become familiar with the HUD ESG regulations (Federal register Vol. 76, No. 233, Dated Monday, December 5, 2011). These regulations can be found on the HUD Exchange web site at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1927/hearth-esg-program-and-consolidated-plan-conforming-amendments/>

The North Carolina ESG Program (NC ESG) is administered under the provisions of the HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 576, as well as the agency’s executed grant agreement. Additional resources and links for the Subrecipients to ESG laws, regulations, tools and notices can be found at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/>

In addition to Federal regulations, applicants must familiarize themselves with the State ESG guidelines including the Desk Guide, RFA and application materials, which can be found at <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/nc-emergency-solutions-grant>

NC ESG has flexibility in certain areas of administering the ESG Program and may establish more detailed requirements than those required by HUD. All Subrecipients are expected to use ESG funds in accordance with the grant regulations contained in 24 CFR Parts 91 and 576 and in compliance with OMB Circular A-200.500 24 CFR 200. Where there are differences, Subrecipients should comply with NC ESG’s requirements according to its grant agreement and the ESG Desk Guide or supplemental guidance related to ESG-CV.

## Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The Applicant shall disclose any known conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, at the time they arise, as follows:

1. Disclose any relationship to any business or associate to whom the Contractor is doing business that creates or may give the appearance of a conflict of interest related to this Contract.
2. By signing the RFA Application, Applicant certifies that it shall not knowingly take any action or acquire any interest, either directly or indirectly, that will conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its services during the term of the Contract.
3. Disclose prior to employment or engagement by the Applicant, any firm principal, staff member or subcontractor, known by the Applicant to have a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest related to this Contract.
4. All notices required by this subsection must be provided to the Department within thirty (30) calendar days Applicant becoming aware of the conflict.

The subrecipient must follow all additional Conflict of Interest Policies as described in Title 24 § 576.404.

## General Grant Requirements

Any organization applying for ESG funds must be a non-profit agency (501c3) or local government entity that is able to begin incurring costs by the start of this contract period.

**Coordinated Entry**

HUD requires (24 CFR 576.400) that all CoC’s establish and operate a fully functional Centralized Coordinated Entry system that all ESG funded activities and subrecipients must utilize. This system must serve all homeless and at risk of homeless populations and subpopulations. All ESG funded organizations are required to follow the Coordinated Entry process adopted by their CoC.

Upon request, ESG funded subrecipients must be able to provide the ESG Office with a report of the referrals received through the Coordinated Entry system adopted by their CoC.

**Coordination with Other Targeted Homeless Services**

HUD requires (24 CFR 576.400) Subrecipients, to the maximum extent practicable to coordinate and integrate ESG activities with mainstream housing, health, social services, employment, education, and youth programs, as well as programs targeted to homeless people in its service area to provide a strategic, community-wide system to prevent and end homelessness.

**Data Collection**

HUD requires (24 CFR 575.500(n)) Subrecipients to use a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), to ensure that all required data elements are collected and required reports are available for review at any time during the program year. Failure to do so may result in suspension of funding or payback of ESG funds.

Agencies that are exempt from the HMIS participation requirement (i.e. Domestic Violence / Victim Service Provider agencies) must meet the same reporting requirements, using a comparable database, that produces electronic reports including, but not limited to, the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), as well as other data request for all State and Federal reporting and evaluations.

**Environmental Review**

Per 24 CFR 576.407(d), HUD-assisted projects are required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by conducting an environmental review to determine the potential environmental impacts of a project or, if applicable, by documenting its categorical exclusion or exemption from this requirement.

The ESG Office will provide each Subrecipient with an Environmental Review form prior to awarding funds. The Subrecipient must complete and return the form to the ESG Office before the contract can be executed and funds can be awarded. This is the only action the Subrecipient is required to take in order to be in compliance with the Environmental Review requirement.

**Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (“VAWA”)**

On November 16, 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development published the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) final rule regarding housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking (Federal Register Document #2016-25888). This final rule prohibits an applicant for assistance or tenant assisted with ESG from being denied assistance under, denied admission to, terminated from participation in, or evicted from housing on the basis or as a direct result of the fact that the applicant or tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, so long as the applicant otherwise qualifies for admission, assistance, participation or occupation (24 CFR 5.2005 (b)(1)).

In addition, the VAWA Final Rule requires that each housing provider produce a detailed emergency transfer plan, which ensures that a tenant receiving rental assistance through or residing in a unit subsidized under an ESG housing program who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking qualifies for an emergency transfer within the criteria stated in 24 CFR 5.2005 (e)(2). All ESG housing providers must maintain records on emergency transfers requested under 24 CFR 5.2005(e). Data must include the outcomes of each request and must be provided to the NC ESG Office upon request.

**Limited English Proficiency/Language Access Plan**

All programs and operations of entities that receive financial assistance from the federal government, including but not limited to state agencies, local agencies and for-profit and non-profit entities, must comply with the Title VI requirements. A listing of most, but not necessarily all, HUD programs that are federally assisted may be found at the "List of Federally Assisted Programs" published in the Federal Register on November 24, 2004 (69 FR 68700).

Federally assisted recipients are required to make reasonable efforts to provide language assistance to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons to the recipient's programs and activities.

## ESG Program Contacts

Below are the ESG contacts. Please direct all questions, concerns, updates, and submission of documents to the ESG Homeless Programs Coordinators, except for requisition requests. Requisition requests must be submitted electronically to the ESG email ([NC ESG@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:NC%20ESG@dhhs.nc.gov)).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lisa Worth**  NC ESG Homeless Programs Coordinator Division of Aging  North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  919-855-4993 office  [Lisa.Worth@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Lisa.Worth@dhhs.nc.gov" \t "_blank)  2101 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-2101 | **Chris Battle**  NC ESG Homeless Programs Coordinator Division of Aging North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  919-855-4984 office  [Chris.Battle@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Chris.Battle@dhhs.nc.gov)  2101 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-2101 | **Alissa Pritchett**  NC ESG Homeless Programs Coordinator Division of Aging North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  919-614-5777 office  [Alissa.Pritchett@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Alissa.Pritchett@dhhs.nc.gov )  2101 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-2101 |

# Section III. Program

## Eligible Applicants

The following are eligible sub-recipients for ESG funding:

1. Units of general local government, including metropolitan entitlement communities that receive direct ESG allocations from HUD
2. Private 501 (c) 3 designated nonprofit organizations.

**Note**: Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) or non-profits established by PHAs are not eligible sub-recipients of NC ESG funds.

## Eligible Activities

There are six (6) categories of eligible activities. For additional information and details on eligible expenses, please refer to the ESG Desk Guide, which can be found on the DHHS webpage <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/nc-emergency-solutions-grant> or the HUD Exchange <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/>

1 - Crisis Response

* + Emergency Shelter (Operations and Services)
  + Street Outreach

2 - Housing Stability

* + Rapid Rehousing
  + Homelessness Prevention

3 – HMIS or Comparable Database

4 - Administration

# Section IV. Funding

## Available Funding

NCDHHS is seeking proposals for up to $1,910,417 million in RUSH funding for homeless services providers in North Carolina to assist with responding to the declared disaster, subject to the availability and appropriation of funds.

The RUSH funding may be used to fund the eligible ESG program activities as described in this RFA. The State is prioritizing funding toward Housing Stability activities that can be quickly implemented to assist individuals and families living in unsheltered environments and those exiting congregate and non-congregate shelter sites to permanent housing.

# Section V. RFA Process

## RUSH Proposed Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| May 6, 2025 | RFA Published |
| June 3, 2025 | All Applications Due |
| June 4-18, 2025 | Application Review |
| June 19, 2025 | Funding Decisions Announced |

## **RUSH RFA Webinar**

**RFA Instructional Session and Q&A**  
All prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the RFA Webinar being offered by the NC ESG Office to review and discuss the RUSH funds. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the NC ESG Office for those who are unable to attend.

Friday, May 2, 2025

## **Submission Guidelines**

**How to Apply**

Project applications for current ESG and/or RUSH subrecipients must include the application document and the budget document. The letter of support from the CoC(s) in which the proposed project(s) will operate should be submitted by the CoC directly to the Smartsheet.

Project applications for new applicants must include the application document, the budget document, and all supporting documentation listed on the application checklist. The letter of support from the CoC(s) in which the proposed project(s) will operate should be submitted by the CoC directly to the Smartsheet.

**All project applications** must be submitted to the Smartsheet.

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e3c35403d6c84bb3b326ea6ee38ddd25>

**Deadline for Submission**  
Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 5:00pm

DHHS will make decisions and interpretations regarding project applications. DHHS is entitled to the full discretion allowed by law in making all such decisions and interpretations. DHHS reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant. DHHS reserves the right to reject any and all applications received. DHHS reserves the right to amend, modify, or withdraw provisions contained in this application that are inconsistent or in conflict with state or federal laws or regulations. All applications for RUSH funding become the property of DHHS.

Section VI. Applications Process and Review

## **Applications**

Project Applications

* Applications will be submitted directly to NCDHHS.
  + Applicants are strongly required to provide letters of support from the Continuum of Care (CoC) where they plan to deliver services that reflect the applicant's engagement in the CoC's efforts to coordinate services.

Selection and Notification

* NCDHHS will review all project applications submitted by the deadline.
* Once approved, non-profit organizations/agencies will contract directly with the Division of Aging.

## Application Budgets

Budgets will be reviewed and awards will be made based on availability of funding, impact of the disaster on the proposed counties served, and additional data as relevant. The State will also evaluate applications based on demonstrated ability to meet and comply with State goals and HUD, ESG, and North Carolina policy and guidelines.

## **Application Review and Award Notification**

Applicants will be reviewed by NC ESG Office to ensure that applications meet all HUD and NC ESG requirements and State goals. If funded, the Award Notification Letter will contain the proposed award amount along with “requirements / special considerations” to submit to the ESG Office. Once received and accepted by the ESG Office, grant awards will be finalized. Funded organizations will be notified directly.

## **Appeals Process**

Any organization may appeal an RFA funding reduction or denial of funding decision to the NC ESG Office. Appeals must be filed on or before **5:00 PM Friday, June 27, 2025**.The appeal must specifically address the items outlined in the NC ESG Award Notification Letter. The NC ESG Office will respond to within thirty (30) days from receipt of the appeal.

The appeal must be in writing on the organization’s letter head, signed by the contract signing authority and addressed to Detra Purcel:

Detra Purcell

Section Chief

Division of Aging

NC Department of Health and Human Services

Detra.l.purcell@dhhs.nc.gov

If the applicant organization is not satisfied with the outcome of its appeal further steps in the appeal process will be provided to the applicant in writing.

# **Section VII. Appendix**

**Appendix I: HUD Homeless Definitions**

The following chart summarizes the homeless definitions; the complete homeless definitions can be found at 24 CFR 576.2.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Literally  Homeless  (Category 1) | Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence:   * Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; * Is living in a publicly or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, hotels/motels paid for by charitable organizations or federal, state, and local government programs; or * Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately   before entering that institution |
| Imminent Risk of Homelessness  (Category 2) | Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary residence, provided that:   * Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance; * No subsequent residence has been identified; and * Lacks resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing |
| Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes  (Category 3) | Unaccompanied youth under age 25, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:   * Are defined as homeless under other listed federal statutes; * Have not had a lease, ownership, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the date of homeless assistance application; * Have moved two or more times in the preceding 60 days; and * Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers |
| Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence (Category 4) | Individual or family who:   * Is fleeing/attempting to flee Domestic Violence / Victim Service Provider; * Has no other residence; and * Lacks resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing |

**Appendix I: Disaster Declared Counties**

* Alexander
* Alleghany
* Ashe
* Avery
* Buncombe
* Burke
* Cabarrus
* Caldwell
* Catawba
* Cherokee
* Clay
* Cleveland
* Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians of North Carolina
* Forsyth
* Gaston
* Graham
* Haywood
* Henderson
* Iredell
* Jackson
* Lee
* Lincoln
* Macon
* Madison
* McDowell
* Mecklenburg
* Mitchell
* Nash
* Polk
* Rowan
* Rutherford
* Stanly
* Surry
* Swain
* Transylvania
* Union
* Watauga
* Wilkes
* Yadkin
* Yancey